

*The Art of*  
**Volunteer  
Development**



Community Development  
Program

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continual revision



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

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Art of the Nonprofit

# *The Art Of* Volunteer Development



# The Art of Volunteer Development

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# PREFACE

The Utah Arts Council Community Development Program is committed to enabling our arts and cultural organizations to grow and stabilize by providing professional development. One of the modes of providing this assistance is through our publications. Our Utah Nonprofit Corporations Handbook is currently in its fifth revision and has assisted many of our organizations in Utah learn the basic steps to incorporating and obtaining their 501 (c) (3) IRS status. Due to the success of this handbook, we decided to publish two companion handbooks, this one on volunteer development in 1999 and another on effective board leadership. We hope these publications will provide you with many of the necessary tools for accomplishing your goals.

This handbook was specifically developed with arts and cultural organizations in mind. Every time we at the Community Development program facilitate a board retreat or teach a workshop, I am always amazed at the lack of formal training in volunteer development. Everyone seems to be scrambling for the fiscal resources without fully considering the value of volunteer resources. Yet very few arts organizations, or other nonprofits for that matter, are run solely by paid staff. The majority use volunteers for at least 80% of their workforce. Multiply that number by an average wage (\$13.73), the dollar value of our volunteers is astounding without even considering the fact that volunteers usually comprise the very heart of an organization.

Of course, I also realize that many nonprofit organizations are having difficulty accomplishing their mission and finding the money for stamps, let alone volunteer management training or other resources. For this reason, we decided to create a 'tool box', a comprehensive resource to help you as leaders, volunteers and staff, learn more about volunteer development. I have combed through all the latest volunteer research and printed resources and combined that with my own years of volunteer experience to produce a basic resource handbook in volunteer development and administration.

These are guidelines and suggestions that have worked for some, but may need to be adapted or adopted to your own leadership style and organization's policies. Since you are all working in the arts and cultural arena, imagination and creativity will not be difficult to employ as you make these adaptations. Also feel free to duplicate any forms to use within your organization. We hope you will be able to accomplish great things through teamwork and persistence. Much success to you in your volunteer efforts!

Anna Boulton, Program Manager  
Community Development

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# INTRODUCTION

*An established company which, in an age demanding innovation, is not capable of innovation is doomed to decline and extinction. Managing innovation will increasingly become a challenge to management, and especially to top management, and a touchstone of its competence.*

*.....Peter Drucker, Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices*

Change is inevitable. We all know this and have all experienced change. However, learning to creatively embrace change is often difficult but so important in today's environment. Peter Drucker's warning is just as applicable to nonprofit organizations as to the corporate world. It is especially applicable to the volunteer environment today. Like our arts and culture arena, the volunteer administrative challenges and environment are in a dynamic mode that reflects a changing society. Volunteerism continues to fill the gaps left when government programs and funding diminish, as well as being the first to identify and respond to social problems and community needs.

How do organizations run solely by volunteers and organizations using a large percentage of our volunteer workforce survive today? Information and creativity. Identifying the social changes, using research to predict the environment, and gaining grassroots knowledge from the volunteers themselves, all contribute to a necessary wealth of knowledge needed to creatively respond to the changing volunteer climate. These are the goals of this handbook. How you use this information will be your challenge.

In the first chapter of the handbook a very important question is asked, "Are you ready for volunteers?" This addresses important fundamental questions every board should consider before volunteer recruitment. However, many of the suggestions can be applied even if your organization has been in existence for years. This chapter also delves into the elements of group dynamics and how they apply to volunteers within the organization.

Risk management is such a concern for nonprofits that chapter two is devoted to those issues and hopefully wades through some of the morass associated with legalities. This chapter also includes some good references for more in depth discussion of risk management.

Chapter three examines the current trends and issues shaping volunteerism and how your organization can be proactive rather than reactive. The answers you discover while going through the worksheet with your board will assist in enhancing all aspects of your volunteer program.

Chapters four and five extend the discussion of current trends by delving into the demographics of who is volunteering today and how your organization can use this

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information in your volunteer recruitment program. Let these chapters tantalize your creativity in tapping into a wealth of human resources.

Much literature has been devoted to understanding what really makes a volunteer satisfied, motivated and committed to an organization or cause. Chapter six looks at past and present research from both a pragmatic and psychological perspective and may dispel some of the myths about the volunteer spirit.

Personality profiles are often used in making the right match between volunteer and position. Chapter seven uses the Meyers Briggs model as a tool to not only enhance the volunteer experience using personality typing, but also give feedback, form teams, and other day-to-day interactions. You will be amazed at the results you will have by learning to use this simple tool.

Chapter seven deals with relationships and the conflict that is inevitable in working with other people. The first half of the chapter suggests ways to understand the expectations of volunteers and staff and how these expectations can often create conflict. The latter part of the chapter helps the reader understand how to deal with conflict and more importantly, that conflict can be a good thing.

In chapter nine, paperwork and building a database are discussed. Suggestions are also given on internal controls and how important they are even in the smallest organization. This chapter also discusses an orientation packet for your volunteers and the importance of this tangible form of instruction.

The final chapter encapsulates the others by taking the reader through a step by step process of developing a volunteer program. Each step refers back to a chapter in the book for further discussion and worksheets. Hopefully, by the time you reach this final chapter, you will be ready to make some changes in your volunteer program and find ways of enhancing their commitment.

Because organizations vary greatly in size, scope, and nature, it would be unwise to assume this handbook could be all things to all groups. Our purpose is simply to offer options and guidelines that you can use to enhance your individual volunteer programs. Volunteers are precious assets and learning how to develop and protect their commitment is of utmost importance in a changing environment. In fact, this may be the one of the most important things you do to meet Peter Drucker's challenge to face our changing world.

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